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RUEKJCS/Joint STAFF WASHDC

RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 1698

RUEHCG/AMCONSUL CHENNAI 4600

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RUEHKKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA 2093

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TAGS: KMDR KPAO PGOV PREL IN

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: PAKISTAN; NEW DELHI.

This countrywide cable reports on relevant media reaction/opinion from India's large non-English press. The Mission reports on English-language media via email through the daily "Early Edition" summary.

PAKISTAN

¶11. "SIGNALS FROM THE RED MOSQUE," editorial in the April 20 right of center DAINIK JAGRAN Hindi daily: "Pakistan's Red Mosque is again becoming a threat. With his release, the mosque's cleric Maulana Abdul Aziz has called for the imposition of Islamic rule in Pakistan. Pakistani hardliners are in high spirits, because of their victory in Swat. The way Aziz was welcomed upon his arrival shows his influence and popularity. The Pakistani government will have to consider to what extent it can allow Maulana to issue his inflammatory statements... he has threatened to take up arms, if needed. This one statement should be enough to put him behind bars again, but the Pakistani government, in its efforts to avoid confrontation, is keeping mum!"

¶12. "LOOK WHO'S TALKING OF HOSTING GAMES!," editorial in the April 20 centrist NAVBHARAT TIMES Hindi daily: "The terrorist attack on Sri Lankan cricketers in Lahore underlined Pakistan's lawless situation. The International Cricket Council is right in taking the decision that Pakistan is not the right place to host the 2011 World Cup. Terrorist attacks have become a regular feature in that country, and the Pakistani government's

strategy seems to be to buy peace with the terrorists, and keep them away from Islamabad. How can one even think of hosting international events like the World Cup in Pakistan, where the government bows to terrorists?"

¶3. "SITUATION IN PAKISTAN STILL EXPLOSIVE," editorial in the April 20 right-of-center Urdu daily MUNSIF: "Threats hovering over Pakistan are due to a lack of healthy and moderate thinking. If the Pakistani Taliban want to implement Islamic Shariah law, they should first learn temperance, which is a cornerstone of Islamic teachings. Anti-Islamic forces are looking for each and every opportunity to deface the image of Islam and its followers. It is high time the Pakistani government, intellectuals and religious organizations turned to moderation and temperance. As a close neighbor, India should take stock of the explosive situation there."

¶4. "PAKISTAN'S DECAY" editorial in April 21 centrist Marathi daily LOKMAT. "The Pakistani government's Sharia accord with the Taliban does not seem to have paid off. Violence continues, and the Taliban have now boldly demanded further concessions. The Taliban is in no mood to abandon weapons. In a statement that has sent shivers down the spines of the Indian and American governments, the Taliban said laying down arms is anti-Islamic. What's to be made of a peace treaty whose cornerstone is violence?"

¶5. "TALIBAN: THREAT TO INDIA," editorial in April 17

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nationalist Oriya daily SAMAJA. "Pakistan's civilian government has bowed to the Taliban. The Swat deal... is in fact a passport allowing the Taliban to bring more regions under its rule. Facing continuous Drone attacks in its strongholds, the Taliban plans to shift its base to Punjab, bordering India. Punjab is a populous and developed province, and America may have to think twice before Drones drop bombs there. Terrorist outfits such as LeT have their base in Punjab, and may join the Taliban. This is a grave threat for India."

¶6. "CRICKET OR DEMOCRACY," editorial in the April 21 nationalist Bengali daily ANANDABAZAR PATRIKA. "Pakistan must understand why it is getting isolated in different international forums. The disinterest and callousness of its leaders in the face of terrorism is now an established fact. The Taliban are openly declaring the game of cricket a crime in Islam, like equal rights for women. Pakistani leaders are more interested in getting western assistance than fulfilling promises to quell terrorism... if this state of affairs continues, not only cricket but many other things will disappear from this 'Talibanistan.'"

BURLEIGH